

love reigns supreme. Yet the golden hours are  
brief: the

priest is recalled to his religion of death, and he  
cannot

*I*  
resist the call, for all the training of years which  
has con-

*j*  
firmed and increased his mystical tendency comes  
back,

*I*  
and he is helpless. Thus the natural life is  
forsaken for

*j*  
the illusions and dogmas of a creed; and  
Albine, whom  
Serge has loved, is left forlorn with her unborn  
babe, to lie  
down and die amid the perfume of the flowers  
with which  
she has strewn her "bed. Serge it is who casts  
the symboli-  
cal pinch of earth upon her coffin, for he has  
resumed his  
ministry among the brutish peasants,  
dedicating all his  
efforts to slay the sex given him by his God, for  
instead of  
living as a man he must obey the command of  
his Church  
and live as an eunuch.

After that battle with nature and love, there  
comes a  
companion picture: the fall of Hélène  
Mouret in. "line  
Page d\* Amour" (X). She has hitherto led an  
absolutely  
blameless life, but a sudden passion sweeps  
her off her feet  
A tragic sombreness attends the episode. No  
glamour is  
cast over woman's frailty in Zola's pages. If

Hfi&ne tastes  
an hour of intoxication she is punished for it  
as frightfully  
as any moralist could desire. Jeanne, her  
fondly loved  
daughter, who is devoured by jealous hysteria,  
dies as the  
result of her lapse; and it is only afterwards,  
in pity as it  
were, that Hd&ne is granted the chance of  
beginning her  
life afresh.

Then the series continues. All the Eougons —  
excepting  
one, Pascal, whom the novelist keeps back till  
the end —  
have now been dealt with, the Mourets also, and  
the chronicle  
of the bastard Macqttart branch begins.  
Antoine Macq^uart  
has three children, Lisa, Gervaise, and Jean,  
and it is Lisa